THE COMIC READER # 18

AUG [redacted]6, 1963

New address: 22529 Karam Ct., Warren, Michigan 48091 U.S.A.

The biggest news from Gold Key (which was just one year old on June 28) is the release of a new title in mid-November--KORAK, SON OF TARZAN, illustrated by none other than Russ Manning and edited by Chase Craig, the duo from GK's west coast offices that gives us the magnificent MAGNUS, ROBOT FIGHTER. Korak, as many of you know, was the real name of Tarzan's son, a corruption of "Jack," which the great apes couldn't say. This new book promises to follow very closely the Burroughs original concept of great jungle adventure.

Although I noted this correction in the Comic Reader Extra in MASQUERADER #5, I want to repeat it here. The artist of Dell's TALES OF TERROR was George Evans, not Frank Springer, as I reported in TCR #17. George currently pencils the daily Terry and the Pirates strip for George Wunder. The Dell horror book that Frank Springer did illo was THE RAVEN, another American International movie. Frank also illos the very excellent BRAINBOY. (See below.)

I hope you're following Tarzan in the Sunday papers. Since John Celardo has taken over the writing chores as well as the illustrating, the strip has improved in action, adventure, and splendor to the point where it may soon rival the days of Hal Foster.

It appears that no one noticed the new artist on DOCTOR SOLAR, beginning with the second story in issue #5 - - the first with the Doctor in costume. Bob Fujitani, the original artist became very busy while working on that issue. (He works with Dan Barry on the Flash Gordon strip.) He had finished the first story and had pencilled the second, but that was as far as he could get within the limitations of Gold Key's press schedule. Fortunately, Frank Bolle, who filled the gap, did it with such perfection that not a single fan called attention to the difference. Frank did all of #6, which is in the September schedule. Frank came to GK from the newspaper strip field, where most recently he worked with Lenny Starr on Mary Perkins, On Stage.

I don't want to give away the story on the upcoming meeting of Captain America and Human Torch in STRANGE TALES #114, but I do want to warn fans not to expect too much. I'm afraid nearly everyone will be disappointed.

The second issue of THE AVENGERS (which is a bimonthly despite the misprint in the indicia strip) will have this new group battling the Sub-Mariner and the Hulk. (No comment.) This story sees the Ant-Man in his new role as Giant-Man, and Iron Man in a new costume. Personally, I liked both characters the way they were. I've heard fans complain about the Ant-Man's lack of originality, but now that Elasi-Woman of the Doom Patrol is in on the scene, the change to Giant-Man may not help this situation. Regarding Iron Man's costume: it looked just as I thought it should, although it was a little too compressible to suit me. The thing that worries me about the Avengers is that it, like The X-Man, may become another Fantastic Four, while it has all the potential of the original

All Winners Squad.

What can I say about the X-MEN?! The first issue was sick, and short of killing off some of the mutants, it can't be improved. It is just a poor imitation of the Fantastic Four with all of the idiotic appeal of Edmond Ha[redacted]'s Legion of Super-Heroes. We'll be given background on the various mutants in the group, but it is their future, not their past, that is crucial. I give the whole group a life of 6 issues, which is probably three issues more than Jack Kirby will give to it. (I hope I'm wrong.)

Although BRAIN BOY #6 is already on the stands, I want to mention it to you, lest you miss it. This is one of the most suspenseful comic-book stories to come along in some time. It kept me on the edge of my chair all the way to the last panel. Unhampered by the Comics Code, the writer (whose name I'm sorry I don't have yet) is able to create that real sense of threat to life and limb that is so necessary for a mystery thriller. Brain Boy is a <u>real</u> hero; he finds that he can't simply "wish" himself out of danger, even though he's the world's greatest telepath.

The idea of "Parallel Worlds" has been refreshingly and successfully applied by editor Julius Schwartz and author Gardner Fox to bring back for us the very colorful Justice Society of America (JLA #21 & 22.) It should be clear to all that the concept should be continued as a series for try-out in SHOWCASE. The series could be entitled "PARALLEL WORLDS" and feature the JSA members singly and in teams. However, I don't want this title taken as a license for more exploitation of the concept such as appeared in LOIS LANE #43 (Aug.) and WORLD'S FINEST #136 (Sept.). Much as I delight in thinking of a world in which Superman has died, or a world in which the current Batman doesn't exist, I strongly object to other DC editors "milking" the concept of the popular "Double-Flash" tales.

Don't fail to vote in DC's "Unique Reader's Poll" (SEA DEVILS #13, Sept. - Oct.). This is your chance to pick your favotire artist from among Joe Kubert, Gene Colan, and the team of Ross Andru and Mike Esposito. Even if you don't vote, you'll want to see this unusual issue in which the artists draw themselves into the strip. As I understand it, DC plans to do more of this. My hat's off to editor Bob Kanigher for recognizing the reader's interest in artists.

It looks like it will be the first of the year before Gold Key can come out with the first issue of MANDRAKE, THE MAGICIAN; and the GK reprints of early JOHN CARTER OF MARS books ought to be on the stands about the same time. Watch for them.

E. Nelson Bridwell, whose informative letters have appeared in TCR, is a pro writer with features in MAD #81 & 82. The first is "Movie Monsters from Everyday Life" illustrated by Joe Orlando, while the second is "Comicland" with pix by Wally Wood. This latter is a movie-type fan magazine devoted to the comics, with additional material by Frank Jacobs. It was while researching this feature that Nelson became interested in the new crop of heroes.

Professor Harbinger (a filler in DOCTOR SOLAR) is written by Paul Newman, who has written most of the Solar stories. The art is by Mel Crawford, whose work has been mainly in the animated field. Most of the best Little Golden Books and the best of the BULLWINKLE books are Mel's work, but because of his success with the Professor, a new kind of art for him, he's now working on a new one, FIREBALL XL-5, a space thing based on a new TV show by the producers of SUPERCAR. The first issue will be on sale in late October.

MORE ITEMS IN THE NEWS--

THE FLASH #140 has the Scarlet Speedster battling his old foe Captain Cold and Cold's new ally, Heatwave. #141 will feature "The Metal-Eater from the Stars" in which Flash becomes the slowest man on earth. The FLASH ANNUAL, scheduled for sale Aug. 29, will carry an original Flash story of 15 years ago, entitled "The Amazing Star Sapphire."

"Why Superman Needs a Secret Identity" is the lead story in ACTION #304 (Oct.). The October SUPERMAN (#164) features a 12-pager in which Supe wears his costume in only about eight panels.

The Doom Patrol stars in "The Night Negative Man Went Berserk" in MY GREATEST ADVENTURE #83 (Nov.).

The October BLACKHAWK (#189) is a book-lengther in which the Black Knights race through three periods of time. #190 features three stories: "The Human Starfish," "The Baron of Plunder," and "The Blackhawk Mascots Vs. The Bogus Blackhawks."

"The Great Clayface-Joker Feud" is the title of a 2-parter in BATMAN #159 (Nov.) Added attraction: an Alfred tale, "The Boyhood of Bruce Wayne, Jr." The Fox, the Shark, and the Vulture are back again in DETECTIVE #321 (Nov.), while Batman joins Superman as usual in WORLD'S FINEST #137 (Nov.) to track down "Superman's Secret Master."

New books from DELL: BRENDA STARR, right from the syndicate, same art, new stories. Classics to come: KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE, MYSTERIOUS ISLAND, and ROBINSON CRUSOE. For those who asked, it is Joe Chilly who illoed BEYOND and WEB OF MYSTERY.

Dr. Strange gets additional space in STRANGE TALES #114. Hot dog! #115 pits the Sandman (from SPIDERMAN #4) against the Torch.

FANTASTIC FOUR #21 will guest-star Sgt. Fury--a turnabout, since Reed Richards was in SGT. FURY #3.

SPIDERMAN #6 will have the Lizard, while #7 brings back the Vulture. Lovers of villany will be happy to note that the Marvel Master Villains appear about as often as some heroes--the next best thing to giving a villain a strip of his own.

JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #97 has the romantic Thor battling Lava Man. This issue also starts the Tales of Asgard series.

TALES OF SUSPENCE #47 starts Steve Ditko at the drawing board on Ironman. He changes Ironman's costume a bit. This should make some fans I know very happy.

The JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA will battle the villainous Queen Zazzava of the bee-world of Korll in issue #23. The story is entitled "Drones of the Queen Bee."

As announced last month in the COMIC READER EXTRA in MASK. #5, DC will begin teaming up various JLA members for try-outs in THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD. Green Arrow and J'onn J'onzz start out in issue #50 and Hawkman and Aquaman will follow in #51. Man, they've really picked some odd combinations to start with. Well, we'll see.

NEWS CREDITS FOR THIS ISSUE: Ron Fradkin, George Pacinda, Paul Gambaccini, Fred von Bernewitz, and the editors of GOLD KEY, NATIONAL, DELL, and MARVEL COMICS. News from pros is especially welcome.

All comments and criticisms in this column are my own.

Jerry Bails

CALLING ALL FANS

IN THE NEW YORK AREA

A local chapter of Comicdom is being organized for the purpose of planning a truly international COMICON to be held in New York in conjunction with the 1964 WORLD'S FAIR, or as soon thereafter as is possible.

TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE!!!!!!!!!

If you live in the New York area, your help is urgently requested. All interested fans should immediately contact

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PHONE 163-9503

(No collect calls, please!)

TCR encourages fans outside the N. Y. area to send George their suggestions for the Convention, and watch their favorite comics fanzines for the latest news of convention plans. Faneds will receive Bulletins from G orge as events progress.

Pros in the New York area have expressed an int rest in the Comicon and several have indicated their willingness to help. It all seems to depend upon the N.Y. fans carrying the ball. How about it, fellows?

TCR wants to thank the many dozens of fans and pros who responded with data needed for the D.C. INDEX. Special collector's items were won by: Lucas Dang, Sidney Costello, Phil Ressegiue, Harry Hertel, Wild Ward, Jeff Rosenfeld, Dennis Tenney, Barry Baumen, Roger Brand, Kim Weston, Paul Leiffer, Glen Johnson, Terry Peters & Raymond Miller.

WANTED

DEAD or ALIVE

REWARD for information leading to the whereabouts of these "old" pros of the comics field:

JACK COLE
BILL EVERETT
SHELDON MOLDOFF
JACK BURNLEY
CARL BURGOS
PAUL GUSTAVSON
CHARLES BIRO
BOB WOOD

and many, many others too numerous to mention. Forward all leads to TCR along with your latest want list. Then watch these pages for your reward.

****

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WILL BUY OR TRADE FOR

Amazing Mystery Funnies V. 2 #8
Banner Comics #1, 2, 3
Fantoman, any
Kayo #1 World's Greatest #1
Major #1 Punch #1
A.B.C. #1 Master #1-5
Miss Fury #3, 4
Phantoman, any
Silver Streak #6
Whiz #15, 16 Wonder #1 (May/38)

I have such comics for trade as ALL STAR #5, SUPER-MYSTERY #2, STAR SPANGLED #9, WORLD'S FINEST #10, etc., or will pay good prices.

KENNETH HEINEMAN
1391 JUNE DRIVE
MAUMEE, OHIO 43537

****

When requesting information from TCR, please enclose a self-addressed postcard for the speediest reply.

TORCHY WALKED BY AND THE BLACKHAWKS ALWAYS REMOVED THEIR HATS

The Story of Pro Cartoonist BILL WARD, creator of TORCHY.

Like so many other artists of the Golden Age of Comics, Bill Ward got his training in Jack Binder's Comic Shop in Englewood, N. J. Along with about 25 recent graduates of the Pratt Institute, Bill knocked out work on Captain Marvel and other Fawcett strips. In those days (1940-41) as many as seven different men would have a hand in every page. The young, budding cartoonists in the shop all had their idols among the established pros. In those days comics were a BIG business, and it remained so until killed by television. A good cartoonist could make $200.00 a week, more than most bank presidents. Consequently, many fine artists were attracted to the field. The outfit that most of the youngsters in Binder's Shop wanted to work for was Quality Comics, due to the terrific threesome it had: Reed Crandal, Will Eisner, and last, but not least, Jack Cole. In Bill's opinion, no other publisher could offer a threesome to top these. As you probably know, Jack Cole later became Playboy's top cartoonist until his death. Will Eisner was so great with his ingenious title splashes that for years his "The Spirit" was put out in supplement form for the Sunday newspapers across the country. However, the one that Bill idolized the most was Reed Crandal because of his marvelous story-telling and the fact that he was considered the best draftsman in the game. This was the reason then that when in 1941 Bill felt he was ready to go out on his on, he chose to apply for a job with Busy Arnold, the publisher of Quality Comics. He didn't think he had a chance, but to his amazement, he got the job. And except for the war years, he worked for Arnold until the comic crash of 1953.

While Bill was in the service he created Torchy for army newspapers, and after his discharge he converted this sexy doll to civilian life for one of the most eye-catching strips published by Quality. Every red-blooded American male from seven to seventy (except perhaps Li'l Abner) knew and loved Torchy--if he read comics at all. While the experts blame TV and the CCA for the decline in comics, I'll always believe that the comics lost their greatest appeal when they lost Torchy. Man, that's what we mean when we say "Them daze was Golden!"

After the war, Bill also took over Blackhawk from his idol, Reed Crandal, so that Reed could handle BUCCANEERS and CRACK WESTERN. Bill soon discovered that it was some job drawing the Blackhawks. It seemed as though all of them had to appear in every panel. It was easy enough for the writer to say "Show all seven B.H.'s fighting a bunch of thugs," but drawing it was an entirely different matter. Bill hasn't been too fond of comic writers ever since.

Bill had the greatest difficulty drawing the Blackhawk's military boots and their air force-type hats. He couldn't do much about the boots, but he developed a pretty neat trick for handling the hats. "I made sure," says Bill, "that all their hats were knocked off in their first fight, which usually came on the first page.

(Continued on the back side.)

TORCHY WALKED BY (Continued from preceding page.)

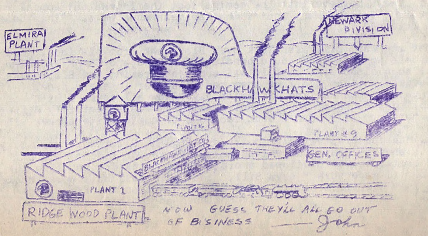
Since I was being paid by the page and not for time, this meant I could turn out a story faster, and make more money." One thing you can say about every pro--He works for money. (Smile!)

Well, Bill's technique for handling the Blackhawk's hats worked just fine for about six months. Then one day an eagle-eyed young fan (That isn't what Bill called him.) wrote George Brenner, the editor, complaining that the Blackhawk's had better go to another hatter. The fan suggested that the Blackhawk's ought to take a smaller hat size, since they were always losing their hats. From then on, the Blackhawks were never without their hats. Bill never dared to take them off--even in church. One time he even had to draw them swimming out to a submarine, with their hats on of course.

Bill had a man working for him at that time, doing his backgrounds for him. On the morning following the new instructions from his editor he found the sketch reproduced below taped to his drawing board. The man, incidentally, was John Putnam, now art director for MAD magazine. The sketch will give you an idea of John's wonderful sense of humor. And the fact that Bill considers this sketch one of his most prized possessions will give you some idea of Bill's wonderful sense of humor. This same sense of humor is evident in the delightful gag cartoons that Bill is currently creating for some of the leading slick magazines for men. You'll find that some of his cartoons carry his own name "Ward", while others carry his pen-name "McCartney"

I close with this word for Bill: Thanks ever so much for permitting me to tell this story about you, and by the way, are you quite sure that it wasn't John who sent that letter to the editor?

J.G.B.



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THE COMIC READER

COMICDOM'S ONLY FREE FANZINE

***

Since March, 1961, Comicdom's official newsletter, and the meeting place of fans and pros from all over the world.

Here are just some of the great events that were heralded in TCR long before they became realities:

**The birth of all these new stars: THE ATOM, SPIDERMAN, THOR, THE HULK, GIANTMAN, IRONMAN, THE WASP, and DR. STRANGE.

**The creation of all these new books: THE AVENGERS, THE X-MEN, THE METAL MEN, AQUAMAN, THE SECRET ORIGINS ANNUAL, THE FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL, & others.

**The appearance of such classic stories as:

*The Origin of the JLA.
*The Death of Superman.
*The Coming of Sub-Mariner.
*The Flash of Two Worlds.
*The Return of The Justice Society of America.
*Spiderman Meets The Fantastic 4.
*PLUS, many, many others.

But TCR carries much more than just news. In the past year alone, it has carried exciting, informative letters from top pros like Gardner Fox, Stan Lee, Joe Kubert, Julius Schwartz, Bill Harris, and others. In addition, TCR conducts the Annual Alley Awards Poll, reviews leading fanzines, carries auctions of rare collector's items, & in general, promotes the causes of Comicdom.

To get your copy of the next issue, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the address on the left.

IMPORTANT: Your return envelope must be at least 9 inches long and carry 10¢ in postage (16¢ for air mail). Send only one envelope at a time. No subscriptions accepted. Advertising rates & deadline supplied upon request.

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WARREN, MICH.

P.S. Let me know what famous covers from the Golden Era of Comics (1933-1948) you would like to see photographed and made available in future offers. Right now I'm looking for collectors willing to loan me (for photographic purposes) any of the following books: WHIZ #2, WORLD'S FAIR 1939, MORE FUN #52, ADVENTURE #40, and #48, CAPT. MARVEL #1, and NICKEL #1.

SET "G"

Here it is--a brand new set of beautiful photographs of famous comics covers. (Cover features are listed in parentheses.)

All Winners #1, 1941 ed. (Capt. America, Torch, Namor, Angel, Toro, Bucky, & Black Marvel)
Big Chief Wahoo #1 (Woggin art)
Boy #3 (Intro. Crimebuster)
Detective #27 (Intro. Batman)
Detective #38 (Batman intro. Robin)
The Face #1 (Face by Mart Bailey)
Firehair #1 (Fairhair by Lubbers)
The Lone Ranger #1 (with Tonto)
Miss Fury #1 (Miss Fury)
Our Flag #1 (The Unknown Soldier)
Sky Blazers #1 (Sky Blazer)
The Skyman #1 (Skyman by Whitney)
Sure-Fire #1 ("Flash" Lightning)
Wow #1 (Mr. Scarlet)
Wow #6 (Intro. Commando Yank and Phantom Eagle)

SET "H"

By popular request, these famous cover photos are being made available once again. Don't miss this chance to get them.

Batman #1 (Batman & Robin)
Captain Marvel #18 (Marvel Family)
Dollman #1
Green Lantern #1 (GL of 1940s)
Jackpot #1 (See bacover of AE #4)
Leading #1 (7 Soldiers of Victory, a JSA-type of the early 1940s)
Master #22 (Intro. Capt. MarvelJr.)
Star Spangled #1 (Star Spangled Kid & Stripsey)
Star Spangled #7 (Guardian & Newsboy Legion by Simon & Kirby)
Superman #1
World's Best #1 (This is the 1st issue of World's Finest)
World's Fair 1940 (1st picture of Superman, Batman, & Robin together)

NOTICE: If you want me to acknowledge receipt of your photo order, then enclose a self-addressed postal card with your order. Thank you.

HAVE YOU HEARD THE NEWS ABOUT The MASQUERADER!

Hello there, fans!Welcome to the world of the Masquerader. I hope you enjoy reading over this short ad and will show some interest in the contents.

For almost a year now Masquerader has been presented to fans as a 30-38 page dittographed fanzine selling for a quarter and presented on a somewhat shaky bi - monthly schedule. Soon, that description will be nothing more than a memory.You see,starting with next issue,Mask is going to be printed photo-offset.Yes,PHOTO OFFSET!!!

First off, the price of the magazine, due to the very much increased cost of printing, will be doubled. But even tho Mask will now cost 50¢ I am sure you fans will not complain when you see the beautiful results of this type of printing.Those of you who have seen Ronn Foss' or Jerry Bails fantastic work on Alter - Ego know what to expect from lithographed/photo-offset work.

Putting out a printed zine is much more difficult than publishing a dittoed zine.Instead of just typing and drawing on a stencil, articles have to be planned precisely for now much space they will take up,roughly typed...then a good copy typed,then arranged on a large size layout page, then glued, etc. Because of this, the bimonthly schedule must be dropped.But if all goes well,I will try to present Mask as,at least, a quarterly.

Issue #6,the first issue to be printed this way, will have 32 pages, but since the work is originally done on $16\frac{1}{2}$" x $12\frac{1}{2}$" sheets before it is reduced to the $8\frac{1}{2}$" x 11" paper by this printing process,I will be able to get on these thirty two pages material that would fill well over forty-some pages if I ran it on the ditto.

Now that I have explained to you most of the preliminaries of this type of printing and the publication of Masquerader I suppose I should get on to what is going to be featured in this next issue.

First off, Ronn Foss is doing a beautiful color cover which will present a shot of the Cowl, the fighting hero who appears within the issue in a strip written by myself (Mike Vosburg) and illoed by one of fandom's top artists, Ronn Foss. Since the origin of the Cowl first appeared in issue #1 with this same team behind him, all the fans who read it have been clamoring for his return. So, he is back,and I hope you enjoy it.

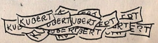
Besides the regular features, such as The Masquerader Speaks there will be six great articles by top writers in this upcoming issue. I've tried to have a variety so as to please more readers; and so, in issue #6: Joe Kubert, King of Illustrators,by Scott Russell;E.C. the New Trend, by Ed Lahmann ; The Raven,Australia's Fighting Hero,by Glen Johnson; Batman's Rogues Gallery, by L. L. Simpson; A History of Ace Publications. by Ray Miller; and What Has Happened to Disney Comics, by Dick West. For a complete lineup of the artists and other features involved, be sure to read over the back of this sheet.

And now, I am finished briefing you on Mask...the rest is up to you,fans.I'll be looking for your order for #6 tomorrow! So long,sincerely,
Mike Vosburg

SPECIAL NOTICES:MASQUERADER #5 is now printed and ready for sale.34 pages only 25¢. Order now...only 40 copies left.

Issue #2 and #3 of Mask are still available for 40¢ each . Hurry,they won't last long!!!!

Now that Russ Heath has left D.C. that company is holding a contest to determine which artist is most capable of handling SEA DEVILS . Among the group of Calan, Andru and Esposito, and Joe Kubert it is evident that Kubert far outshines them all. Even tho we won't be able to see Kubert's fantastic work on Hawkman, we may still be able to see his work on this semi-super- hero group if we get going and back him.Write today to National and send in your vote for fandom's favorite, Joe Kubert!!



NONE but the BEST!

To the left of this column is a picture of two of fandom's top artists: Biljo White (l.) and Ronn Foss (r.). Their work, as well as the work of Grass Green, Alan Weiss, etc., appears regularly in MASQUERADER. You will notice that all of the aforementioned artists are the best there are in fandom...and all the art they turn out is par excellence.

Not only with art, but also with writing Mask is trying to achieve the highest possible goal. In other words, we are striving for quality......top quality. This aim of ours we felt could not be reached by merely the 'dittograph' method of printing. We want to present to fandom the highest type of quality possible, until we are at least on a level with the pro's. And so, feeling as we do about this effort Mask is now switching to the photo-offset or litho method of printing. We trust that you will not be even slightly disappointed when you see the amazing results of this change in the upcoming issue of Mask.

Though it is a great enjoyment to the editor to see Mask improve in these ways, it is you, fans, who we are trying to please. We hope you appreciate our efforts on Mask and will stick with us...while Mask climbs upward. finus

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PHOTO-OFFSET REPRODUCTION!!!

MASQUERADER #6

Featuring

COLOR cover with THE COWL as drawn by Ronn Foss!!!

Interesting news of Fandom as your editor speaks out in THE MASQUERADER SPEAKS!!!

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A HISTORY OF ACE PUBLICATIONS...an interesting account of the company that published Capt. Courageous, Unknown Soldier, and so many others; written by Raymond Miller and illustrated by Grass Green!!!

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